



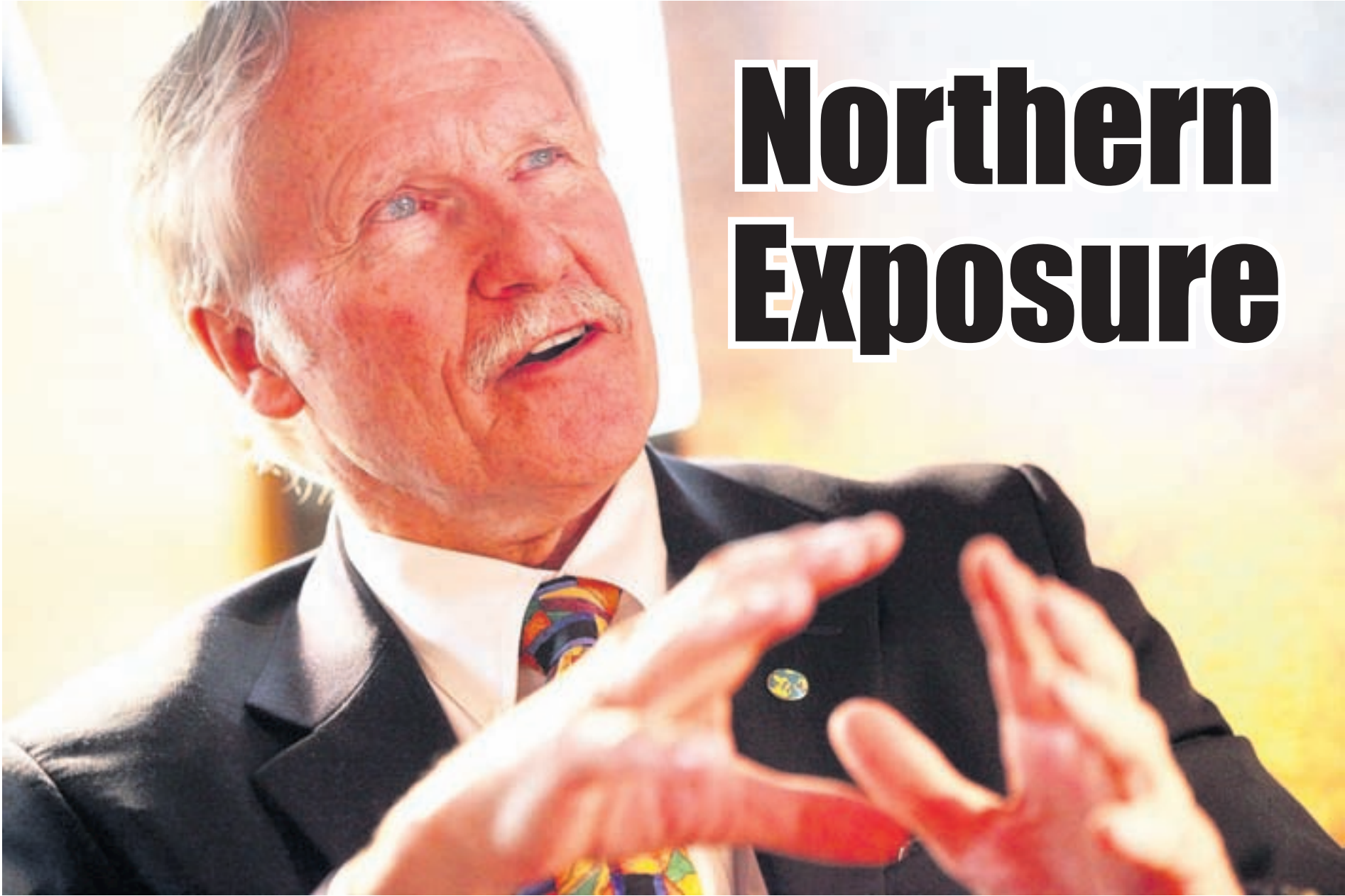
MAGNIFICENT TWIN GRAND PARADES IN SAN NICOLAS ON SATURDAY AND ORANJESTAD ON SUNDAY TO CLOSE ARUBA'S CARNAVAL!

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Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Saturday, February 14, 2015



Northern Exposure

Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber speaks during an interview in Salem, Ore. Kitzhaber, long regarded as a wily survivor of Oregon politics, resigned Feb. 13, 2015 amid a spiraling crisis that included a criminal investigation of the role that his fiancée played in his administration as well as crumbling support from his Democratic Party colleagues.

(Thomas Patterson/The New York Times)

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The Aruba Today Newspaper announces that due the 'Carnaval Monday' holiday, we will not be in circulation Monday, February 16, 2015. We will be back on newsstands everywhere bright and early to serve our readers and advertisers first thing in the morning, Tuesday, February 17, 2015. Until then, have a wonderful Carnival Weekend from the team at the Aruba Today Newspaper!

Ukraine cease-fire deadline provokes bitter last-gasp battle

Associated Press

ARTEMIVSK, Ukraine (AP) —

Russian-backed separatists mounted a vicious assault Friday in eastern Ukraine ahead of a weekend cease-fire deadline, pummeling a strategic railway hub with wave upon wave of shelling in a last-minute grab for territory. At least 26 people were killed across the region.

The fiercest confrontations focused on the government-held town of Debalt-

seve, a key transport center that has been on the receiving end of dozens of artillery and rocket salvos in the 24-hour period after the peace deal was sealed Thursday by the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France.

Associated Press reporters observed intense shelling Friday along the highway north of Debaltseve, which remains the town's only land link with the rest of government-controlled ter-

ritory. The deadline for the warring sides to halt hostilities is Sunday at one minute after midnight. Interfax-Ukraine news agency quoted Petro Mekhed, Ukraine's deputy defense minister, as saying that separatist forces had been tasked with hoisting their flags over Debaltseve, as well as the key port city of Mariupol, before the cease-fire takes hold.

Military spokesman Andriy Lysenko said 11 soldiers



Russian-backed separatists wait for their transport, preparing to leave towards the frontline, in the village of Vergulivka, just outside Debaltseve, eastern Ukraine, on Friday, Feb. 13, 2015. Fierce fighting surged Friday in eastern Ukraine as Russian-backed separatists mounted a major, sustained offensive to capture a strategic railway hub ahead of a weekend cease-fire deadline. At least 25 people were killed across the region, officials reported.

(AP Photo/Maximilian Clarke)

have been killed and 40 wounded across eastern Ukraine since the agreement was reached in the Belarusian capital, Minsk. At least eight civilians also have died in government-controlled territory, regional authorities loyal to Kiev said, while the rebels said seven civilians were killed in artillery attacks on the separatist-held cities of Luhansk and Horlivka.

Shells landed Friday as far as Artemivsk, a government-held town 25 miles behind the front line. Associated Press reporters saw the body of a child killed after rocket fire hit a kindergarten there, and regional officials said the child and one other civilian died in the attack.

In recent days, separatist fighters have nearly completely encircled Ukrainian forces in Debaltseve, where all but a few thousand civilians have fled the fighting.

Ukraine says Debaltseve should remain in govern-

ment control under the terms of a September peace deal. A copy of that agreement leaked to Ukrainian media shows the town lying on the government's side of the line of division agreed by both the rebels and Ukrainian officials.

But even as Thursday's peace deal was announced, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko appeared to disagree over the town's future. Putin said the rebels consider the Ukrainian forces there surrounded and expect them to surrender, while Ukraine insisted its troops have not been blocked.

On Friday, Ukrainian access to the sole highway linking Debaltseve to government-held territory looked to have been compromised with the apparent capture of Lohvynove, a village just to the north. AP reporters on Friday saw the smoldering remains of two Ukrainian army trucks on a road nearby. □



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Governor of Oregon resigns amid fiancée scandal

KIRK JOHNSON

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SEATTLE - Gov. John Kitzhaber, long regarded as a wily survivor of Oregon politics, resigned Friday amid a spiraling crisis that included a criminal investigation of the role that his fiancée played in his administration as well as crumbling support from his Democratic Party colleagues.

It was a steep and rapid fall for Kitzhaber, 67, a former emergency room doctor who won an unprecedented fourth term as governor in November. His resignation means that Kate Brown, the Oregon secretary of state and a fellow Democrat, will become governor, in accordance with the succession plan in the state constitution.

Even during the recent election, Kitzhaber had been plagued by questions about his fiancée, Sylvia Hayes, with whom he lived, and whether she had violated ethics rules or criminal laws in advising him about clean energy issues while serving as a consultant on the topic. Before November's election and after, he repeatedly denied any wrongdoing by Hayes, 47, or his office, and pledged cooperation in the various

inquiries, including one initiated this month by the state's attorney general, Ellen Rosenblum, who is also a Democrat, which could

those who distanced herself, releasing a statement Thursday describing what she said was a "bizarre" meeting she had had with

certain about why she had come. "This is clearly a bizarre and unprecedented situation," Brown said in her statement. "I informed the

the state House and Senate before her election as secretary of state in 2008 and is regarded as a liberal - although that covers a wide range of positions in Oregon. She will also be the state's first openly bisexual governor.

Kitzhaber rose through the state legislature before first winning the governor's office in 1994. He served two terms then, and subsequently made a comeback for a third term in 2010, becoming a signature presence for a generation of Oregonians - with an urban cowboy style of jeans, boots and a sport jacket with no tie that became a kind of personal brand.

But with his opponents preparing to collect signatures for two recall petitions, the attorney general's looming investigation, and, perhaps most crucially, a vacuum of support from the Democrats who control the state legislature, Kitzhaber decided he had had enough. In a statement released by his office, Kitzhaber said he would be exonerated.

"I am confident that I have not broken any laws nor taken any actions that were dishonest or dishonorable in their intent or outcome," he said. □



President Barack Obama and Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, at a rally in Portland Ore. Kitzhaber, long regarded as a wily survivor of Oregon politics, resigned Feb. 13, 2015 amid a spiraling crisis that included a criminal investigation of the role that his fiancée played in his administration as well as crumbling support from his Democratic Party colleagues.

(Doug Mills/The New York Times)

result in criminal charges. But in the past few days, some senior Democrats in the heavily Democratic state abandoned him and called for his resignation. Brown, 54, the secretary of state, was among

Kitzhaber - saying that he had asked her to rush back to Oregon from a conference in Washington, D.C., this week to speak privately with him. But once in the meeting, Brown said she found him confused or un-

governor that I am ready, and my staff will be ready, should he resign."

Brown, a lawyer who practiced juvenile and family law before entering politics, is not a stranger to state government. She served in

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Most Alabama counties are granting same-sex marriage licenses



Kim Gebauer, left, and Regina Gebauer both of Daphne, Ala., get married in a double wedding with Peggy Belcher, second from right, and her partner Louise Lynn, both of Mobile, Ala., at Government Plaza in Mobile, Ala. The Rev. Sandy O'Steen of Cornerstone Metropolitan Community Church in Mobile, Ala., officiated.

(AP Photo/Sharon Steinmann)

CAMPBELL ROBERTSON

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MOBILE, Ala. - As probate courts around Alabama opened Friday, a day after a federal judge barred the probate judge in Mobile County from denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples, a realization began to sink in among many that a weeklong judicial row was coming to a close. "After yesterday's ruling, it seems inevitable," said Probate Judge Rocky Ridings of Marion County, in the northwestern part of the state. "There's no point in making attorneys rich and going on to lose anyway." Like many probate judges reached Friday, Ridings said that he was still going to talk with his lawyer about his options but that he would probably begin issuing marriage licenses to all couples, straight and gay, next week.

This week, for him and others, has been confounding. Judge Callie V.S. Granade of U.S. District Court ruled in January that the state's same-sex marriage ban was unconstitutional, and

as of Monday, that ruling was to be in effect. But on Sunday night, the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, Roy S. Moore, ordered probate judges not to comply, arguing that the federal ruling did not apply to them because, among other things, probate judges were not defendants in that case.

On Thursday, however, Granade ordered Probate Judge Don Davis of Mobile County to comply with her earlier ruling, which apparently sent a signal to many of the other judges around the state. "You got the federal judge here on the left and the chief justice on the right, and here I am in the middle," said Probate Judge Leon Archer of Tallapoosa County, who ceased issuing any licenses this week but will pick up again next week giving licenses to straight and gay couples. "I have my beliefs, but in my office I have to put those aside." A tally of probate courts Friday by Freedom To Marry, a group that advocates for the rights of gays to marry,

put the number of counties issuing or planning to issue marriage applications to same-sex couples at 47 out of 67.

That had nearly doubled since Thursday and accounted for more than three-quarters of the state's population. Those that are not among the 47 include counties that are issuing li-

censes only to straight couples, those that are issuing no licenses at all and those for which the current policy is unknown (in some rural areas probate courts keep limited hours and may not be open Friday). Some judges in these counties said Thursday's ruling did not definitively settle the confusion.

"I took an oath to uphold federal and state, and right now I feel like I'm still under state because there's not been a federal ruling to me," said Probate Judge Ryan Robertson of Cleburne County, who added that his personal convictions certainly affected his decision not to issue licenses to same-sex couples. □



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As hate crime inquiry begins;

Obama strongly condemns killings of Muslim students

JONATHAN M. KATZ
RICHARD PÉREZ-PEÑA
 © 2015 New York Times

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. - President Barack Obama on Friday condemned the killing of three Muslim students in North Carolina as federal investigators said they had begun an inquiry into whether the killings were a hate crime.

"No one in the United States of America should ever be targeted because of who they are, what they look like, or how they worship," the president said in a statement released by the White House. "As we saw with the overwhelming presence at the funeral of these young Americans, we are all one American family."

The president's comments - coming as the FBI, federal prosecutors and the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department announced they would look into the killings as a possible hate crime - followed growing pressure from Muslim groups around the country and the world who have complained about a lack of attention to the brutal killings. The three students were shot and killed over what the police initially described as a parking dispute with a middle-aged white neighbor who later turned himself in.

The case has quickly become an international cause. The government of Jordan - former home of the family of two of the victims - advised that it was closely watching the case, while the prime minister of

Turkey rebuked Obama earlier in the day for not speaking out. Ban Ki-moon, secretary-general of the United Nations, also extended condolences to

war had raised more than \$300,000 by Friday morning. Advocates for Muslims, civil rights groups and the victims' families said Friday

told them that all three victims had been shot in the head, and say they do not accept statements by the authorities that the fatal confrontation appeared

Council on American-Islamic Relations, said: "It comes at a critical time, where American Muslims feel under siege. This announcement, I believe it's comforting for many people." The FBI at first said that it would aid in the investigation by local and state authorities, but would not conduct its own investigation. When asked Wednesday about the shootings, a White House spokesman said, "We're going to await the results of that investigation before we say anything."

Then, late Thursday, the FBI issued a statement that federal authorities had "opened a parallel preliminary inquiry," something short of a full-fledged investigation, "to determine whether or not any federal laws were violated related to the case."

Ripley Rand, the U.S. attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, said his office was committed to fully investigating the case, adding that it was important that the Muslim community know that the federal government was taking what happened seriously. "I intend to review every piece of evidence involved in it to make sure that we do our part to see that justice is done," Rand said. "This is obviously a matter of global concern." A coalition of 150 civil rights and religious groups, most of them not directly involved in Muslim or Arab affairs, called Friday for a full-fledged federal investigation. □



Helen Schietinger holds a sign during a demonstration and Muslim prayer in response to the killing of three Muslim students in North Carolina on Tuesday, in front of the White House in Washington, Feb. 13, 2015. Muslim and Arab-American groups on Friday welcomed the news that the FBI would look into the killings to determine if they were a hate crime, even as outrage and pressure for action grew around the world.
 (Jabin Botsford/The New York Times)

the victims' families.

Muslim groups also organized a prayer outside the White House on Friday afternoon, one of more than 100 vigils that have been held, or are scheduled, in several countries, for the students - Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, 21; her husband, Deah Shaddy Barakat, 23; and her sister, Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, 19. They were shot to death Tuesday outside a Chapel Hill apartment complex.

A project by Barakat to raise \$20,000 to help refugees of the Syrian civil

that even if the FBI inquiry was partly about appearances, those appearances matter, sending a needed message that the federal government takes anti-Muslim and anti-Arab bias seriously.

Fire damaged an Islamic Center in Houston on Friday morning, prompting speculation about another bias crime. And Muslim leaders have voiced fears that a long-scheduled "Summit on Countering Violent Extremism," will fan anti-Muslim sentiment.

Relatives of the Chapel Hill victims say the police have

to have begun, at least, as a neighborhood parking dispute. "Everybody in both families - brothers, sisters, parents - believes wholeheartedly that this is a hate crime, so they feel validated that the FBI is looking into it," said Linda Sarsour, who has acted as a spokeswoman for the families. "We're in a pretty critical juncture when it comes to Americans and Islam. The feds might be doing this as a way to say to the American Muslim community, here's an olive branch." Nihad Awad, executive director of the

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Medication in home of suspect in 'American Sniper' trial

JAMIE STENGLE
Associated Press

STEPHENVILLE, Texas (AP) —

Authorities found marijuana, a nearly empty bottle of whiskey and anti-psychotic medication while searching the home of the former Marine charged with killing "American Sniper" author Chris Kyle and his friend, a Texas Ranger testified Friday.

The testimony was the latest of the evidence presented to jurors this week that has shed light on Eddie Ray Routh's mental state at the time of the killings two years ago at a rural Texas shooting range.

The case has drawn intense interest, largely because of the Oscar-nominated film based on Kyle's memoir that details his four tours in Iraq. The film has unexpectedly grossed nearly \$300 million.

Texas Ranger David Armstrong said the search of the small wood-framed house turned up drug paraphernalia, alcohol and medication prescribed to Routh that defense says was used to treat schizophrenia. On the refrigerator was a note with Kyle's name and phone number. Defense attorneys are

mounting an insanity defense for the former Marine. Prosecutors have described the 27-year-old as a troubled drug user who used marijuana and whiskey the day of the killings and knew right from wrong despite any history of mental illnesses.

If convicted, Routh faces life in prison without parole. On Thursday, prosecutors presented a video in which officers spoke with Routh as he sat in the pickup that authorities said he took from Kyle after fleeing the shooting range where Kyle and his friend Chad Littlefield were killed.

Routh refused to leave the vehicle and eventually sped off with police in pursuit.

At one point during the chase, the video shows that a police vehicle rammed the pickup. Eventually the car became disabled along the side of the road.

The video showed officers trying to talk Routh into surrendering as he makes comments such as, "Anarchy has been killing the world," "I don't know if I'm going insane," and, "Is this about hell walking on earth right now?" □



Ex-Marine Eddie Ray Routh, center, enters the courtroom after a lunch recess during his capital murder trial at the Erath County, Donald R. Jones Justice Center in Stephenville, Texas, Friday, Feb. 13, 2015. Routh, 27, of Lancaster, is charged with the 2013 deaths of former Navy SEAL Chris Kyle and his friend Chad Littlefield at a shooting range near Glen Rose, Texas.

(AP Photo/Paul Moseley)

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American Living:

Health sign-ups rocket, spurred by warnings of penalties

ROBERT PEAR

ABBY GOODNOUGH

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WASHINGTON - The Obama administration, which for the first time is telling consumers that they face a "hefty penalty" if they fail to sign up for health insurance by Sunday, is on course to meet its goal of enrolling several million more people than last year.

In the last few days, the administration has flooded consumers with emails exhorting them to sign up and, in some cases, noting the potential penalties. "While the penalty is a minimum of only \$95 per adult without coverage in 2014," one message says, "that



Vi Nguyen, right, translates for her sister-in-law, Kim Trinh, left, as Laura Burbank, a certified application counselor with Planned Parenthood, helped Trinh sign up for health insurance on HealthCare.gov in Manchester, Mo., Feb. 12, 2015. The Obama administration, which for the first time is telling consumers that they face a "hefty penalty" if they fail to sign up for health insurance by Sunday, is on course to meet its goal of enrolling several million more people than last year.

(Whitney Curtis/The New York Times)

fee rises to a minimum of \$325 per adult without coverage in 2015, and to \$695 per adult in 2016."

California officials reinforced the federal message. Peter V. Lee, the executive director of the California insurance exchange, said "the cost of remaining uninsured is rising," adding, "A family of four earning \$70,000 a year could pay close to \$1,000 in their taxes if they remain uninsured in 2015."

When the current sign-up period began in November 2014, there were 6.7 million people with coverage through the exchanges. The administration's goal is to have at least 9.1 million people enrolled and paying premiums at the end of this year.

Enrollment is likely to exceed that goal, but to fall short of the Congressional Budget Office's projection of 12 million people for 2015.

Helping the enrollment process, consumers, insurance companies, agents and brokers, counselors and federal and state officials said signing up had gone more smoothly than in the first open period a year ago, when President Barack Obama and millions of citizens found that HealthCare.gov was often unusable.

Anne Dunkelberg, the director of the health program at the Center for Public Policy Priorities in Texas, said the difference for people using HealthCare.gov was "like night and day." No longer stymied by technical problems, she said, "consumers can focus on the complexities of selecting a plan and entering the right information in an application."

Many consumers are seeking insurance to avoid tax penalties.

"We are hearing this again and again from insurance agents and community groups," Lee said. "People are walking in their doors because they got sent there by H&R Block or a tax adviser who told them, 'You got a penalty for 2014, but you can avoid it next year.'"

Jodi A. Ray, the director of a large network of insurance counselors based at the University of South Florida in Tampa, said that "people are more concerned about being hit with penalties" this year. In addition, she said, consumers who seek counseling this year are often more knowledgeable, having done some research on HealthCare.gov.

The Florida counseling program is among the most effective in the country. About 1.3 million Florida residents are enrolled this year, up from 984,000 last year.

Still, there are some issues. Dunkelberg said that in many of Texas' 254 counties, especially in sprawling rural areas, consumers have difficulty finding experts who can help them compare and select health plans.

Since Nov. 15, more than 10 million people have selected health plans or been automatically re-enrolled through the federal and state exchanges, and a final surge is expected over the weekend.

Experience suggests that 1 million to 1.5 million people who sign up will not pay their share of premiums and will have their coverage canceled in coming months. □

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Taliban hit Shiite mosque in Pakistan, killing 20

RIAZ KHAN

Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)

— Taliban militants stormed a Shiite Muslim mosque in northwestern Pakistan on Friday, killing 20 people in a wave of gunfire and explosions before the siege ended, officials said.

The attack marks the latest violence against a religious minority that has suffered repeated bombings and assassinations by hardline Islamic militants. The violence also underscored the challenges the military and police face to secure the country two months after a horrific Taliban attack against a school sparked public outrage and cries for greater security.

The attack in the city of Peshawar wounded more than 45 people, according to Mian Mohammad Saeed, the chief of operations for the Peshawar police.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the violence. There were varying accounts of how many attackers carried out the assault. The militants released a video showing three attackers while the head of the provincial police, Nasir Durrani, said four or five attackers were involved.

The attackers entered the mosque from a building next door that was under construction, he said. They jumped over an outer wall into the mosque courtyard. One person then blew himself up, creating a diversion so the other attackers could enter the mosque, Durrani said. He said at least three attackers died in the violence — two by blowing themselves up, and a third was killed by worshippers at the mosque.

"People here showed great courage. They grabbed one of the attackers from his neck, and he couldn't detonate (his explosives), and he was shot and killed," Durrani added.

Authorities were still examining the scene, and Durrani did not say what happened to any of the remaining attackers.

Some worshippers who fled the mosque reported that

at least some of the attackers were wearing security uniforms.

"The prayer was about to end when a big bang happened, followed by dust and smoke. I have seen amid the smoke that one guy dressed in a police uniform was firing shots and then there was another blast," said one of the wounded, 22-year-old Syed Javed Hasan, speaking from his hospital bed.

One of the dead, Naveed Abbas, worked for the U.N. Department of Safety and Security, according to a statement released by the United Nations. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the attack and urged Pakistani authorities, "to redouble their efforts to protect religious and ethnic minorities and to combat terrorism in all its forms," the statement said.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the U.S. was saddened by the attack and stands in solidarity with the government and people of Pakistan in confronting extremist violence.

A spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, Mohamad Khurasani, said the attack was in revenge for the execution of one of their members by the Pakistani government. This is the same group that claimed responsibility for a horrific attack on a school, also in Peshawar, on Dec. 16 that left 150 people dead, almost all of them students.

The violence horrified Pakistan and led to cries that more needed to be done to combat militants. The military stepped up operations in the rugged tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, and the government lifted a ban on executions in terrorism-related cases.

But despite these efforts attacks continue.

On Jan. 30, militants targeted a Shiite mosque in the southern city of Shikarpur, killing at least 59 people.

Sunni Muslim extremists often target Shiite religious pilgrims and places of worship because they do not consider Shiites to be true Muslims. □



People rush an injured person to a hospital following an attack involving suicide bombers and gunmen at a Shiite mosque in Peshawar, Pakistan, Friday, Feb. 13, 2015. Militants stormed a Shiite mosque in northwestern Pakistan on Friday, killing many people in a wave of shooting and explosions before the siege ended, officials said.

(AP Photo/Mohammad Sajjad)

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More embassies shut down in Yemen amid violence

AHMED AL-HAJ
Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Saudi Arabia, Italy and Germany shut down their embassies in Yemen on Friday amid growing political uncertainty as Yemen's top U.N. envoy warned that the Arab world's poorest nation is at a crossroads between "civil war and disintegration."

The new embassy closures come days after similar measures by the United States, France and Britain, threatening international isolation for a country that houses the world's most active al-Qaida branch. Yemen's elected president resigned last month after a several-month power struggle with Shiite rebels, who have controlled the capital, Sanaa, since September.

The rebels, known as Houthis, have since dissolved the parliament, and President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and his Cabinet ministers remain under rebel house arrest. United Nations negotiations, headed by envoy Jamal Benomar, to resolve the deadlock have stalled.

"Today Yemen is at a crossroads," Benomar told a U.N. Security Council briefing Thursday. "Either the country will descend into civil war and disintegration, or the country will find a way to put the transition back on track."

The Italian Foreign Ministry said in a statement Friday that the ambassador and his staff were returning to Italy, and expressed hopes that U.N. mediation would create conditions permit-



Policemen stand by U.S. Embassy vehicles, two in the foreground, while patrolling at the parking lot of the Sanaa international airport in Sanaa, Yemen, Friday, Feb. 13, 2015. Houthi rebels seized about 20 vehicles left by U.S. diplomats and Marines at Sanaa's airport, officials said.

(AP Photo/Hani Mohammed)

ting the embassy to reopen. In Berlin, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Sawsan Chebli said its staff left the country Friday.

Saudi embassy joined the rest of the Arab Gulf countries, which evacuated their embassies weeks ago, and a security official said

that the Saudi ambassador along with remaining staffers also left the country on Friday.

The Houthis, whose stronghold is in northern Yemen, are members of the Shiite Zaydi sect, which composes nearly 30 percent of the Yemeni population. Their

takeover has emboldened the militant Sunni Muslims of Yemen's al-Qaida branch, which has stepped up attacks in southern and central Yemen and garnered support among disgruntled Sunni tribes — raising concerns of a widening sectarian conflict. □

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2 Al-Jazeera journalists walk free in Egypt

MAGGIE MICHAEL
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Two Al-Jazeera journalists walked free from an Egyptian prison Friday and were reunited with loved ones after more than a year behind bars on terror-related charges that drew international criticism from human rights and media groups. Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohammed are free pending their retrial, scheduled for Feb. 23. A third colleague, Peter Greste, was released two weeks ago and deported to his home country of Australia.

Human rights lawyer Amal Clooney, who represents

Fahmy, cautioned that there is no guarantee the case will be closed or that the journalists will be acquitted.

Fahmy holds a Canadian passport, and Clooney urged that he be deported the way Greste was. She asked that the Canadian prime minister "personally intervene" to ensure authorities hand Fahmy over to Canada under a recently approved decree that gives Egypt's president the right to deport foreigners who are either on trial or have been convicted.

"This case is not over yet, but it should be," Clooney said. Mohammed was

initially sentenced to 10 years in prison and Fahmy to seven years but Egypt's top appeals court subsequently ordered a retrial after overturning the initial ruling, citing "flawed evidence." On Thursday's first session of the retrial, the judge ordered their release for now.

Fahmy was reunited with his fiancée after his brother posted \$33,000 bail Friday. "Free Sunshine at Cairo Marriott Where it all started with my better half ... till death do us part," Fahmy said in a tweet. He and Greste were arrested at the hotel in a police raid more than a year ago. □

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Venezuela officials say ex-general, 13 others in coup plot

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Venezuelan officials on Friday cheered the thwarting of what they said was a planned coup that involved a plot to blow up the presidential palace. President Nicolas Maduro announced Thursday night that a retired air force general had been arrested and 13 other people were implicated in a plot to overthrow the South American country's 15 year-old socialist revolution.

"We have foiled a coup attempt against democracy and the stability of our homeland," Maduro said, speaking on the anniversary of the start of street protests that wracked the nation last year.

Venezuela's government has frequently alleged coup plots, often without providing much evidence or follow up.

Congress president Diosdado Cabello said in a television broadcast that 11 soldiers were among those implicated, including a retired general, and that several had been arrested. He also named two opposition politicians and a businessman as plotters and charged that the U.S. had tried to buy the loyalty of air force officers.

Cabello showed photos of weapons and other items that he said had been seized from those implicated. In addition to the palace, the plotters planned to bomb the Defense Ministry and the headquarters of the government-sponsored news channel



An opposition demonstrator prepares to throw a molotov cocktail at police after clashes broke out at a protest in Caracas, Venezuela.
(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)

Telesur, officials charged. On Friday, the military's top leadership denounced the purported coup in a

nationally televised news conference.

Opposition coalition spokesman Jesus Torre-

alba rejected the claim of a plot. "The government makes up these stories about coups to avoid talk-

ing about how the country is breaking down," he told a group of journalists.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki took a similar line, calling the accusation "ludicrous" and saying it was part of a pattern by Venezuela's government of looking for scapegoats as the country's struggles with severe economic problems.

"These efforts reflect a lack of seriousness on the part of the Venezuelan government to deal with the grave situation it faces," she told reporters in Washington.

A study by the Caracas-based newspaper Ultimas Noticias counted 63 allegations of assassination plots from the beginning of the late Hugo Chavez's presidency in 1999 and his death in 2013. □

Case against Argentine president moves forward

PETER PRENGAMAN
Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP)—The Argentine prosecutor who inherited a high-profile case against President Cristina Fernandez reaffirmed the accusations Friday, formally renewing the investigation into whether she helped Iranian officials cover up their alleged role in the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community center. A top government official called the move a "judicial coup."

Prosecutor Gerardo Pollicita's decision to go forward with the case was significant because it sets the stage for a close examination of the investiga-

tion that prosecutor Alberto Nisman was building before he was found dead Jan. 18. The next day, Nisman was scheduled to elaborate his accusations to Congress. Nisman accused Fernandez, Foreign Minister Hector Timerman and others in her administration of brokering the cover-up in exchange for favorable deals on oil and other goods from Iran. Fernandez and Timerman have strongly denied the accusations, and Iran has repeatedly denied involvement in the bombing, which killed 85 people.

In a statement, Pollicita recounted Nisman's accusations without providing any analysis of them. He did

not go as far as Nisman in requesting that Fernandez and other officials be questioned.

However, he concluded that an investigation is necessary to "achieve a degree of understanding to prove or disprove the factual and dogmatic extremes expressed in the preceding paragraphs."

Pollicita will present his findings to judge Daniel Rafecas, the federal magistrate assigned to the case who will ultimately decide whether to dismiss it or send it on to trial.

Meanwhile, three other prosecutors and a coordinator were named on Friday to take over Nisman's

general investigation into the bombing itself, which he had led for 10 years. No one has been convicted in the case.

Nisman's death has brought increased attention to his accusations against Fernandez, with television stations dedicating several hours each day to all aspects of his probe and the investigation into his death nearly a month after he was found with a bullet in his right temple. Fernandez's popularity has suffered, according to several polls.

Even before Pollicita's decision, amid rumors that it was coming, her administration was moving to both reject and minimize it. □

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Puerto Rico leader pushes for value-added tax amid scrutiny

DANICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— Puerto Rico's governor on Friday defended his proposal to create a 16 percent value-added tax as pressure built on the government to fix its finances.

Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla held a round table discussion with other officials to stress that the tax is needed to help the U.S. territory

emerge from an eight-year recession and pay off \$73 billion in public debt.

The meeting was held just hours after Standard & Poor's lowered its rating on Puerto Rico's general obligation bonds, warning that the government might not be able to honor its debt and fund public services.

Garcia dismissed those concerns and said that creating a value-added tax as part

of a larger tax reform would generate an estimated \$1.5 billion.

"This would guarantee the government's ability to pay its future expenses and previous debts with recurring funds," he said.

Standard & Poor's disagreed, saying the value-added tax could have negative consequences because the government has struggled to collect tax rev-

enues in the past. It noted that the current 7 percent sales tax has not generated the anticipated revenues or reduced tax evasion.

"Puerto Rico's focus more recently has turned to new rounds of financing to simply maintain critical levels of operating cash, while paying a steep price for acquiring new financing. All of this poses a threat, in our view, to the commonwealth's

ability to continue providing basic governmental services," the agency said.

The downgrade comes as Puerto Rico considers a \$2 billion bond sale to raise more money. But it is unlikely investors will be swayed by the report, said David Tawil, co-founder and portfolio manager of New York-based Maglan Capital, which follows distressed companies. □

US allows imports of privately produced products from Cuba

M. WEISSENSTEIN
A. RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — The Obama administration is announcing that it will allow Cuba's small private business sector to sell goods to the United States in a potentially important loosening of the half-century trade embargo on the communist island.

A list published by the U.S. State Department Friday said Americans will be allowed to import anything produced by Cuban entrepreneurs with the exception of food and agricultural products, alcohol, minerals, chemicals, textiles, machinery, vehicles, arms and ammunition.

The imports would have to be produced by a Cuban operating in one of the dozens of categories of pri-



Miniature flags representing Cuba and the U.S. are displayed on the dash of an American classic car in Havana, Cuba. The Obama administration is putting a large dent in the U.S. embargo against Cuba as of Friday, significantly loosening restrictions on American trade and investment. The new rules also open up the communist island to greater American travel and allow U.S. citizens to start bringing home small amounts of Cuban cigars after more than a half-century ban.

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

vate business allowed by the Cuban government. Most of the categories are for services like car main-

tenance or watch repair, not potentially exportable goods. What's more, virtually all Cuban exports are

produced and shipped by state-controlled enterprises and there is no indication that the government is willing to loosen control and allow private businesses on the island to start trading directly with firms overseas. In short, no one should expect Cuban goods to start flowing to the U.S. in large quantities anytime soon, said Pedro Freyre, head of international practice at Florida-based law firm Akerman LLP.

However, the possibility of exporting Cuban goods to a massive market 90 miles away could inspire private businesses to begin developing products designed for export to the U.S., he said. "It sets up the mechanism. It allows things to happen," he said. "Now folks have got to make things happen, which is an

entirely different matter." Cuba began allowing widespread private enterprise in 2010 as economic stagnation forced the state to weigh large-scale job cuts. The number of people employed in private businesses grew to 483,396 this year and appears to have stalled at roughly that number due to a lack of domestic demand. More than a quarter of private jobs are in food sales, transportation and housing rental.

A potential source of exports to the U.S. is the new category of worker-owned cooperatives, which function in many ways like entrepreneur-owned businesses but are more closely integrated with the state bureaucracy and may find it easier to export than entirely private enterprises. □

Jamaica extradites first lottery scam suspect to US

D. McFADDEN
Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)

— A Jamaican man was extradited this week from the Caribbean island to Florida on charges that he was involved in a lottery scam ring that defrauded elderly Americans out of their retirement savings.

The U.S. Justice Depart-

ment identified the suspected swindler as Damion Bryan Barrett of the northern parish of St. James, where many of Jamaica's lottery scams have been based over the years. His indictment by a federal grand jury in Fort Lauderdale charged him with 37 counts of wire fraud.

The 28-year-old is the first

lottery scam suspect to be extradited by Jamaica to the United States. He was arrested last month on suspicion of inducing elderly U.S. victims to send thousands of dollars in phony fees to claim winnings from a bogus lottery.

"These criminal telemarketing scams heartlessly target the elderly in the Unit-

ed States, at times stealing their life savings," said Alys Erichs, special agent in charge of Homeland Security investigations in Miami.

The transnational telemarketing fraud first became entrenched in the island's underworld about a decade ago.

Jamaican scammers us-

ing fake identities proved adept at cajoling often elderly targets to send money in hopes of claiming supposed lottery winnings. And once targets balked at wiring more money, the fraudsters would extort more payments by threatening to burn down their homes or rape their grandchildren. □



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PALM BEACH - Be part of the innovative and futuristic, simple but outstanding food journey the Blue Lobster Restaurant is starting just this week. New dishes are making a debut. Fresh fish and fruits of the sea, brought in daily by the local fishermen, will start a parade of succulent and delicious new ways to indulge yourself in a fantastic and memorable dinner with your loved ones.

The Blue Lobster Restaurant is proud to be part of the culinary feast available on this paradise island, and cannot go on this trip without giving our clients a fair chance to sample and enjoy a good local dish made with love and care, conserving all its native roots and wonderful seasoning, classic dishes like: Keshi Jena, Balchi Pisca, Keri-Keri, real Aruban Sopi Pisca, (fresh fish soup as starter) you will love all this. If pasta is your thing, the Blue Lobster Restaurant is your place for it. Italian favorites will also come into the picture at Blue Lobster Restaurant. Come in and give us your expert opinion-we guarantee you will not be disappointed.

Meat anyone? Of course Angus beef is our preferred-12oz sirloin steaks made to perfection, or perhaps a nice 10oz rib eye steak, or a butterfly juicy tasty fillet mignon, all flame-broiled on the open fire. You will not resist this temptation. This actual remark was posted at TripAdvisor by one of the patrons.... "do not go by the looks of the entrance.... you are not buying the building.... you are there to get your money worth and to enjoy one of the best dinners ever, while in Aruba."

Believe what others are saying but also confirm by yourself... go to TripAdvisor and see how 98% of



our clients are stating their satisfaction and happiness for having chose Blue Lobster Restaurant. We are not perfect, and perhaps cannot please everyone, but being near to perfect and keep striving to reach perfection... I think that will do, Says Mr. Castano, owner of this cozy little place in Palm Beach.

Having 'Good Food, Good Service And Good Prices' is something Blue Lobster Restaurant will always care

about, so in this way everyone has a great opportunity to enjoy a wonderful meal and a fantastic time. This is all what it is to be able to consider having received your money worth. Clients are coming from far parts of the world even from Moscow. With the name of this little restaurant in the list of 'Must Visit' places when in Aruba. TripAdvisor is getting more and more reviews on the positive side every day with some exceptions which pushes management to work even harder to be able to please all clients visiting the restaurant.

Blue Lobster Restaurant is for believers, adventures, sophisticated and determined clients which will go for their own opinion and

let nothing detour them from having a nice time and a fantastic dinner. The Blue Lobster is not the only great seafood place of the island, but it is one of the best. As it appears in the 10BEST web site, 'not going there while on Aruba, is like not being in Aruba.'

The Blue Lobster Restaurant is also about having fun and lots of it. Now every Monday a great 'Dinner and a Show' is available for a very reasonable price-your ticket is available via your concierge, or at the restaurant itself, and your ticket includes your taxi to the restaurant! Just cut the ad from the paper, present it to your host and they will pay the taxi for you!

Soon you will be able to enjoy the most beautiful

sunset on the island-yes a sun set tour and a dinner. It's another activity which will be available. For even more fun you will be picked up at your hotel and taken to the 'Special Place' where the most spectacular sunset viewing takes place... it is almost a secret place, known to very few. There while you enjoy the sunset there will be good music, Blue Mojitos, beer and soft drinks... take tour "Cunukero Picture" free of charge dressed up as one of the local Kunukeros (local farmers)-what a moment to remember. Then head up to your most unforgettable culinary experience... dinner at the Blue Lobster Restaurant.

The restaurant has received the award "Certificate of Excellence" for the year 2014-2015, this is the third consecutive year that TripAdvisor recognized the high quality of the food and service that clients receive at Blue Lobster Restaurant. This was obviously based on the Positive Comments and Positive Reviews posted by patrons of the restaurant in this prestigious Travelers Website (over 200 million affiliates).

Valentine's Day is another special occasion where Blue Lobster Restaurant does participate. As a token of appreciation on Valentine's Day, food dollar prices will become guilders-what a way to celebrate! Be there with your loved ones. Champagne Welcome Drink, a red rose for the ladies, and the most romantic cozy atmosphere with live entertainment at tableside.

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Prestige Vacations Aruba goes Majestic for Aruba's Carnival!



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ORANJESTAD - Prestige Vacations Aruba, a stand-alone division of Prestige Realty, Inc., has teamed up

with the Majestic Carnival Group and has contracted to become the main sponsor of this multiple award-winning and very progressive carnival organization, for now only for this 61st anniversary of Aruba's carni-

val. This carnival group led by the dynamic Ms. Swinda Winterdaal participated in the Lighting Parade on February 7th in Oranjestad, the Parada di Luz in San Nicolaas on February 12th,

and will participate this weekend in the Carnival Parade in San Nicolaas on February 14th and of course in the Aruba's Grand Carnival Parade in Oranjestad on February 15th, 2015. This year's theme of the Majestic Group is "The Four Seasons," a theme that surely appeals to the

general public and compliments the goals of Prestige Vacations Aruba, being the premier year-round deluxe vacation service provider on the island. Musical animation during the parades will be provided by the popular local band D'Licious. Enjoy the shows to the max! □

Loyal Visitors to Aruba Honored at Renaissance Hotel



ORANJESTAD - Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring Mr. Mario & Mrs. Grace Ferrante, residents of Rye Brook, New York, as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, Transportation, Primary Sector and Culture Mr. O. Oduber as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years.

The certificate was presented by Darline S. de Cuba representing Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mr. Tino Daal from the Activities desk of Renaissance Hotel. Top reasons for returning provided by the honorees, they consider Aruba to be the "Happy Island" Fantastic sunset, beautiful blue ocean, friendly Aruban hospitality and local restaurant. Congratulation Mario and Grace-you hold a special place in the hearts of Arubans. □

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Café the Plaza

3 course menu US\$ 32.00 per person

Appetizer

Creamy Broccoli Soup or
Smoked Salmon Tartar with an Egg Salad

Entrée

Ranch Parmesan Chicken with Fettuccini or
Spicy Coconut Curry Shrimps or
Skirt Steak with Pepper or Mushroom Sauce

Dessert

Creamy Chocolate Cake or Creamy Fruit Salad

Casa Tua

3 course menu US\$ 79.00 per couple

Appetizer

Smoked salmon rolled in crepe with fresh dill-flavored ricotta cheese along with avocado macaroon and fennel julienne marinated in lime juice or
Seared noix Saint Jacques laid on a pear and mushroom capriccio Mesclun and vanilla vinaigrette

Entrée

Shrimp, mahi mahi and squid "A l'Armoricaïne" nested on a bed of fettuccine French famous Brittany stew based on tomato, shallots, white wine, cognac and saffron or
Beef tenderloin "a la plancha": in a fresh green pepper and cognac sauce with a Portobello mushroom fricassee and a broccoli flan

Dessert

Tiramisu or
Fresh strawberries in homemade whipped cream

Champagne

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15% OFF on the dinner check.

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Buy a double scoop and receive the third scoop FREE!

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Cuba's Cookin'

Valentine's Day for 2 US\$ 70.00 per couple
Two tenderloin 4 oz. steaks with green pepper sauce
Two lobster tails 5 oz. in garlic sauce
Two jumbo shrimp in garlic sauce
Served with mashed potatoes for 2,
topped with asparagus
2 glasses of Mum's Champagne

Cilo City Lounge

3 course menu US\$ 45.00 per person

Includes a glass of sparkling wine

Appetizers

Puff pastry filled with mixed seafood ragout
Portobello and beef soup
Assorted mushroom risotto

Entrée

Chateaubriand served with Hollandaise sauce,
topped with asparagus and Pomme Duchesse or
Lobster Thermidor served with polenta and
steamed broccoli or
Surf & Turf of Beef Tenderloin with blue cheese gratin
and three jumbo shrimps in garlic butter

Dessert

Two flavors mousse topped with chocolate,
strawberry and whipped cream
Choose your flavors: mud pie, peanut butter with butter
finger, malted milkshake, vanilla, lemon, butterscotch,
chocolate, raspberry or orange cream

Hopi Bon Teppanyaki Bar & Grill

3-Course menu US\$ 70.00 per couple

Appetizer

Fried Gouda Cheese or
Beef Tenderloin Blanket

Entrée

Teppan Beef Tenderloin and Chicken
Teppan Beef Tenderloin and Shrimp
Baked 6 Layers Ziti
With 2 Side Orders

Dessert

Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream
Caramel Flan with Strawberries

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Sea Salt Grill

3 course menu US\$ 39.00 per person

Appetizer

Lobster Bisque or
Fish Ceviche or
Traditional Caesar Salad

Entrée

Tenderloin & Italian Sausage with choice of
Chimichurri or Port Sauce or
Fish Fillet and Lobster Tail in Creamy Garlic or
Linguine Costa Amore with Shrimps, Mussels & Scallops

Dessert

Caramel Flan or Choco Cake or Apple Pie

Sidebar Bistro Aruba

3 course menu US\$ 49.50 per person

Appetizer

Trio of fish or
Clear soup of beef and Portobello mushrooms

Main Course

Snapper Fillet and shrimps with a butter lemon sauce or
Tenderloin wrapped in bacon with a red wine shallot sauce

Dessert

Strawberry & Passion Fruit Fantasy

Starbucks

- Gift Certificates
- Coffee bag + mug or tumbler, starting at US\$ 31.00

Sushi Ya & NextDoor

Winter Heart Garden US\$ 25.00
Assorted sashimi / Ceviche & crispy plantain chips /
Avocado cream with ice cream dessert accompanied
by a glass of our Valentine's sparkling Rose Cocktail.

or
Summer Heart Garden

US\$ 25.00

Assorted hot items / Ceviche & crispy plantain chips /
Avocado cream with ice cream dessert accompanied
by a glass of our Valentine's sparkling Rose Cocktail.

Dunkin' Donuts

Medium coffee + donut

US\$ 3.82

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Magnificent Twin Grand Parades to Close Aruba's Carnaval 61!



ORANJESTAD/SAN NICOLAS – Witness the grand finale of Aruba's world famous Carnaval this weekend, which for the most part will signal 'goodbye'

to Carnaval #61! Revelers will enjoy the Grand Parade of San Nicolas, which will take place all day Saturday in downtown San Nicolas, and then be-

fore partygoers can catch their breath, the last parade of the season, Oranjestad's Grand Parade, will roar through downtown Oranjestad on

Sunday from 1pm till the sun sets into the Caribbean Sea! Set your plans for a great place to enjoy the parades, because whether you are marching

or watching, you can have your fill of jumping and bouncing, and see what it truly is to be a part of Aruba's Carnaval! □



Matt Jones reacts after missing a birdie putt on the 10th green of the Spyglass Hill Golf Course during the second round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament Friday, Feb. 13, 2015, in Pebble Beach, Calif.

Associated Press

Snedeker, Jones tied for lead at Pebble Beach

DOUG FERGUSON,
AP Golf Writer
PEBBLE BEACH, California
(AP) — Enjoying the best weather Pebble Beach has to offer is one thing. Brandt Snedeker knew he had to take advantage of it with his golf clubs, too. Snedeker played bogey-free at Spyglass Hill in abundant sunshine and warmth Friday for a 5-under 67 to share the 36-hole lead with Matt Jones in the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Jones had a 66 at Spyglass. They were at 12-under 131. Justin Hicks shot a 68 at Monterey Peninsula and was one shot behind. John Daly, who started the second round one shot behind, didn't make a birdie over his final 11 holes at Monterey Peninsula and shot a 72. He was six shots behind, and has to play well Saturday to avoid missing his 11th straight cut at this event. □

LIGETY SLICK



Ligety defends world giant slalom title for 3rd time

United States' Ted Ligety races down the course during the men's giant slalom competition at the alpine skiing world championships Friday, Feb. 13, 2015, in Beaver Creek, Colo.
Associated Press

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Donald Young beats Aussie Bernard Tomic in Memphis

TERESA M. WALKER
AP Sports Writer
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Donald Young needed three sets to beat Bernard Tomic of Australia 7-6 (8), 4-6, 7-5 Friday in the quarterfinals of the Memphis Open. Young, among five Americans in the quarterfinals at The Racquet Club, struggled with four double-faults in the second set. He bounced back by saving three of four break points in the third set to advance to the semifinals in Memphis for the first time. Young improved to 6-2 this year. He will play No. 2 seed Kevin Anderson of South Africa, a 6-4, 6-4 winner over sixth-seeded Steve Johnson, on Saturday. Kei Nishikori of Japan, the two-time defending champ, plays Austin Krajicek on Friday

night followed by No. 3 seed John Isner and Sam Querrey in the other quarterfinals. With the win, Young reached the fourth ATP Tour semifinal of his career as he looks for his first tournament title. "Anytime you make it to the weekend, you are playing well," Young said. "It hasn't happened too often in my career, so when it happens I am very excited." Anderson, in his second semifinal this year, needed only 65 minutes to defeat Johnson. The South African served up 16 aces and won 32 of 36 points on his first serve. Johnson struggled with three double-faults and missed his chance to break Anderson in the 10th game of the second set. Anderson held serve to close out the match. □



Donald Young returns a shot to Bernard Tomic in a quarterfinal round tennis match at the Memphis Open Friday, Feb. 13, 2015, in Memphis, Tenn.

Associated Press

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A success story

Wim Arns, a middle-aged Dutch man, got severely burned on his hands and face when cigar ashes drifted down into a bucket of paraffin oil he was holding, causing a spontaneous explosion. Wim: "After being treated in the Burn Centre in Rotterdam, the doctors referred me to a skin therapist in my hometown to continue the aftercare of the burn scars. My skin felt really tight and itchy, and I wanted a cream to help with this. That's when the therapist recommended *Alhydran*. Already within an hour of applying the cream, I felt my skin had more space to breathe and the itching stopped. My face has healed completely, the skin has total flexibility again, and the same goes for my hands. Therapy certainly contributed to this, but I attribute the flexibility of the skin and eradication of the itching to the use of *Alhydran*."

Alhydran through the eyes of a professional

Rina Rijkenberg is a certified skin therapist in Oosterbeek, the Netherlands. As a specialist, she has different skin products to choose from, but *Alhydran* is her #1 solution. Rina: "A lot of complaints are that the skin feels dry, itchy, red, sensitive, and painful, which are symptoms frequently associated with burn victims, lymph edema patients, and people who have undergone radiation therapy or have general scar tissue, acne, or excessive hair. All this can be caused by a deregulation in the moisture levels of the skin. The secret to *Alhydran* is that it regulates the moisture levels of the skin continuously in an unprecedented way. A very high dosage of pure Aloe Vera gel delivers the hydration, and pure Vitamin C, Vitamin E, and Jojoba oil prolong the activity. Patients can actually see and feel their skin healing."

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Ted Ligety wins 3rd straight giant slalom at worlds

PAT GRAHAM

AP Sports Writer

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. (AP)

— A remarkable final run slid Ted Ligety right into the record books.

The American stormed back from a first-run deficit Friday to become the only man to win three straight giant slalom titles at the world championships.

Behind Marcel Hirscher of Austria by 0.24 seconds after the morning run, Ligety found speed down the course where others couldn't and finished in an unofficial time of 2 minutes, 34.16 seconds. Hirscher was second, 0.45 seconds behind, and Alexis Pinturault of France earned the bronze. "To be able to come through and pull it off is awesome," said the 30-year-old Ligety, who's from Park City, Utah.

It was the first gold medal of these championships for the Americans. Ligety also

won the 2011 world GS title in Germany and again two years ago in Austria, which was part of his three gold medal performance.

The fifth racer out of the gate in the final run, Ligety didn't make a single mistake on a course he knows so well. He pumped his fists again and again, knowing his time was going to be difficult to beat.

The last competitor of the afternoon, Hirscher, presented the biggest threat. But he steadily lost time throughout the course and couldn't catch Ligety.

With his win secure, Ligety tossed his ski high into the air as the fans screamed.

"My run was good. Ted's run was outstanding," said Hirscher, who's captured a gold medal in both the Alpine combined and team event at Beaver Creek worlds.

This is why skiers on the World Cup circuit refer to



United States' Ted Ligety races down the course during the second run of the men's giant slalom competition at the alpine skiing world championships Friday, Feb. 13, 2015, in Beaver Creek, Colo. Associated Press

Ligety as "Mr. GS." He now has seven podium finishes at worlds, surpassing Lindsey Vonn as the American skier with the most individual medals.

"Ted was, today, in his own league," said Germany's

Felix Neureuther, who finished fourth, 1.10 seconds behind Ligety. "He's amazing."

Especially on this hill, where he's won five World Cup races, including in December. The podium that day

was Ligety, Pinturault and Hirscher.

"I love racing in the U.S." Ligety said. "Just having that extra comfort level, being closer to home, with friends and family, is huge." □

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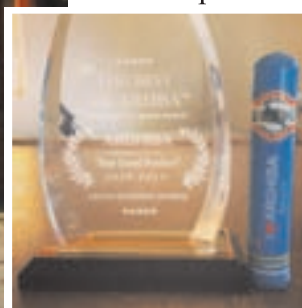


ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the RIO Hotel, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive by the box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also

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Owner Benjamin Petrocchi

Hitchcock reaches milestone in Blues' 6-3 win over Lightning

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Florida (AP) — Alexander Steen had a goal and two assists to help St. Louis coach Ken Hitchcock move into sole possession of fourth place on the NHL wins list in the Blues' 6-3 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Thursday night. Hitchcock's 693rd regular-season win broke a tie with Dick Irvin. The Blues coach only trails Joel Quenneville (739), Al Arbour (782) and Scotty Bowman (1,244), who scouted the game as a Chicago senior adviser. T.J. Oshie, Dmitrij Jaskin, David Backes, Paul Stastny and Vladimir Tarasenko also scored for the Blues. Tampa Bay got goals from Tyler Johnson, Brett Connolly and Steven Stamkos.

Islanders 3, Maple Leafs 2 UNIONDALE, N.Y. (AP) — Anders Lee scored two goals, including the tie-breaker in the second period, and Jaroslav Halak made 32 saves for his 30th win of the season.

Lee scored in each of the first two periods, and Casey Cizikas added a goal for the Metropolitan Division-leading Islanders, who have won three straight and four of five. Richard Panik and Trevor Smith had goals in the second period as Toronto erased a 2-0 deficit. Jonathan Bernier stopped 38 shots, but dropped his eighth straight decision. The Maple Leafs have lost 13 of 14 (1-12-1) overall and 12 straight (0-11-1) on the road.

Ducks 2, Hurricanes 1 RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Matt Beleskey had the go-ahead goal and an assist and the Ducks snapped a three-game losing streak. Francois Beauchemin and Beleskey scored 2:52 apart in the second period to help the Pacific Division leaders improve to 24-0-7 in one-goal games. Jeff Skinner scored a power-play goal for Carolina, which had its two-game winning streak snapped. In his first start since Oct.

30, John Gibson made 35 saves for Anaheim and Cam Ward stopped 15 shots for the Hurricanes.

Penguins 5, Senators 4, SO OTTAWA (AP) — David Perron scored the shootout winner to lift the Penguins. Sidney Crosby, with two goals, Kris Letang and Evgeni Malkin also scored for the Penguins, while Thomas Greiss made 29 saves. Mika Zibanejad, Mike Hoffman, Mark Stone and Kyle Turris scored for the Senators, playing their first of a five-game homestand. Robin Lehner, making his career-high seventh consecutive start, stopped 25 shots.

Down 3-0 to start the third period, the Senators made an impressive comeback to tie the game 4-4 late in the period.

Perron scored the only goal of the shootout with a quick wrist shot.

Oilers 4, Canadiens 3, OT MONTREAL (AP) — Anton Lander scored at 1:47 of overtime to lift Edmonton. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins' second goal of the game tied it with 25 seconds left in regulation while Edmonton was playing with an extra attacker.

Matt Hendricks also scored for the Oilers, who are 2-2-0 on a six-game road trip that takes them to Ottawa on Saturday and Winnipeg on Monday.

Lander scored the winner from in front of the net, while Nugent-Hopkins took a puck off defenseman Andrei Markov's skate and scored on a spin-around shot from the slot to force the extra period.

Christian Thomas, Alex Galchenyuk and Max Pacioretty scored for Montreal, which had its three-game winning streak ended.

Predators 3, Jets 1 NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Rookie Filip Forsberg set a franchise record with his 19th goal this season and also had an assist and the Predators earned their fourth straight win.

Forsberg topped the mark previously held by Alexan-

der Radulov in 2006-07 with a power-play goal that put Nashville up 2-1 in the second period.

Shea Weber had a goal and two assists, James Neal had a goal, and Roman Josi added two assists as Nashville maintained a three-point lead atop the NHL standings.

Pekka Rinne made 32 saves for his league-best 32nd win. The goalie is 13-1-1 in his past 15 games for the Predators.

Michael Frolik scored for the Jets. Winnipeg snapped a two-game winning streak in its first game with defenseman Tyler Myers and forward Drew Stafford following Wednesday's trade that sent Evander Kane to Buffalo.

Wild 2, Panthers 1 ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Jason Pominville and Zach Parise each scored on assists from Mikko Koivu, and Devan Dubnyk made 26 saves. The Wild improved to 9-1-2 in their past 12 games, all with Dubnyk in net.

Nick Bjugstad scored in his return home, but goalie Roberto Luongo fell to 3-10-2 in his career at Xcel Energy Center as the Panthers started a stretch of seven out of eight games on the road.

Luongo's record in his past 12 starts also fell to 3-7-2. He stopped 21 shots.

The Wild killed five penalties and stayed perfect short-handed in eight games since the All-Star break at 22 for 22. They're fourth in the NHL in penalty killing. The Panthers had eight power-play goals in their previous eight games.

Rangers 6, Avalanche 3 DENVER (AP) — Kevin Hayes had a goal and two assists and the Rangers survived a third-period rally.

Rick Nash scored his NHL-leading 34th goal and Cam Talbot stopped 26 shots for New York.

The Rangers have won four of their last six to move into third place in the Metropolitan Division. They are three points behind second-place Pittsburgh and have



Colorado Avalanche right wing Jarome Iginla, front, reaches out for the puck as New York Rangers defenseman Kevin Klein breaks up Iginla's rush to the net during the third period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015, in Denver. The Rangers won 6-3.

Associated Press

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History says \$100M pitchers must produce MLB results fast

RONALD BLUM
AP Sports Writer

Max Scherzer and Jon Lester might as well have neon-green dollar signs stamped all over their uniforms and caps when Major League Baseball spring training opens next week.

Their careers were redefined this offseason when they joined MLB's elite echelon of \$100 million arms, a sweet 16 whose salaries total an even sweeter \$2.42 billion. Every game they start, and every pitch they throw, will be viewed through the prism of their incomes. Judging by history, they had better succeed swiftly with their new teams. Wins and innings pitched are likely to dwindle with age.

Theo Epstein, the Chicago Cubs' president of baseball operations who signed Lester, likens these megadeals to a "splurge on a luxury item," MLB's equivalent of a Birkin bag or vintage Ferrari.

Is the roster candy worth it to their teams? Or merely a status symbol?

"They are difference-makers. They are special talents. Usually there are only 10 to 12 of these in the game, and they give you something that no one else has," said agent Scott Boras, who negotiated the deals for Kevin Brown, Barry Zito and Scherzer. "A lot of teams have a lot of pitchers, but few teams have a true No. 1."

Only three pitchers have won World Series rings after signing nine-figure contracts: CC Sabathia with the New York Yankees, and Zito and Matt Cain with the San Francisco Giants. The rest find their finances sated but their ambitions starved.

The \$100 million pitchers have combined to average a 12-9 record and 3.39 ERA during the first four seasons of their deals, according to STATS. During the remaining years, they fell to a 7-7 record and 4.43 ERA.

Durability decreases dramatically, with the group



These are file photos showing baseball pitchers Homer Bailey, Kevin Brown, Matt Cain, Zack Greinke, Cole Hamels, Mike Hampton, Felix Hernandez, Clayton Kershaw, Cliff Lee, Jon Lester, CC Sabathia and Johan Santana. Max Scherzer and Jon Lester report to spring training with new teams next week, swelling the \$100 million pitcher club to 16 members.

Associated Press



These are recent file photos showing baseball pitchers, from left, then-Detroit Tigers' Max Scherzer, Masahiro Tanaka, Jason Verlander and Barry Zito. Max Scherzer and Jon Lester report to spring training with new teams next week, swelling the \$100 million pitcher club to 16 members.

Associated Press

averaging 205 innings in first seasons, 178 by the third year, and 132 by the fifth.

Justin Verlander was 124-65 and 30 years old when he signed his big deal with Detroit in March 2013. He is 28-24 since, slowed by core muscle surgery before the 2014 season.

"I don't think that there's anyone that looks at long-term contracts for pitchers that are older, and thinks that all of them are going to be years of investment that are at the highest rate," Detroit Tigers president Dave Dombrowski said. "You expect some type of decline and adjustment that takes place."

Pitchers and catchers start workouts with World Series champion San Francisco on Thursday, and position players join five days later. Among

the players making fresh starts are Pablo Sandoval and Hanley Ramirez with Boston; Matt Kemp, Justin Upton and James Shields with San Diego; and David Robertson with the Chicago White Sox.

And Alex Rodriguez returns to the New York Yankees at age 39 following his yearlong suspension. Seeking their first championship, the Washington Nationals gave the 30-year-old Scherzer a \$210 million, seven-year contract, \$5 million shy of the record for pitchers set by the Los Angeles Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw.

The Cubs, who won their last title 17 days after the Ford's first Model T left the car factory in 1908, guaranteed \$155 million over six seasons to Lester, and included 25 hours of private jet use annually to seal the deal with the left-

hander, who turned 31 last month.

Epstein weighs health history, body type, athleticism, character, work ethic, mechanics and toughness among the factors in determining whether a pitcher is worth it.

"If you sign Andy Pettitte at age 31, you would have gotten performance throughout the contract," Epstein said. "So it's just a matter of trying to sign the right guy." Brown became MLB's first \$100 million man when he signed with the Dodgers in December 1998. He pitched Florida to the 1997 World Series title, and San Diego to the 1998 NL pennant.

Brown's deal shocked a league accustomed to escalating salaries since free agency began in 1976. Sandy Alderson,

then an executive in the commissioner's office, called it "an affront to baseball." "I'm in mourning," said Larry Lucchino, San Diego's president at the time. "Not for the Padres, but for baseball."

Brown was 139-99 with a 3.30 ERA when he agreed to the contract and went 72-45 with a 3.23 ERA during the deal for the Dodgers and Yankees, who acquired him for the final two years. In all, the \$100 million men have averaged a 96-64 career record with a 3.46 ERA when they agreed to the contracts, then a 39-28 mark with a 3.55 ERA mark while earning the big money.

Just two of the previous 14 have losing records under their deals: Zito was 63-80 for San Francisco, and Cole Hamels has gone 17-23 for Philadelphia despite a 3.05 ERA in the first two seasons.

"For most long-term deals, you see the best return on investment in the earlier years, and typically in the last year or two, you're not getting quite the bang for the buck," Epstein said. "Inflation helps mitigate that somewhat, because by the end of your deals, salaries have escalated, the cost per win has escalated, so you're not requiring the player to do quite as much to be worth the contract at that point."

Nine of the pitchers reached their deals as free agents, and the others were within two years of free agency. Kershaw and the Yankees' Masahiro Tanaka were the youngest at 25, and Brown the oldest at 33. Boras said the dropoff is factored in. He argues the aces are underpaid in the initial seasons.

"These players may be worth \$40, \$45 million for those three or four years," he said, "The complaint is that, 'Oh, you're going to pay for this in the later years.' Well, the reality of it is you're not paying their true value in the early years. That's the quid pro quo." □



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Are you a hack waiting to happen? Your boss wants to know

BARBARA ORTUTAY

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The next phishing email you get could be from your boss.

With high-profile security breaches on the rise, from Sony Pictures to Anthem, companies are on the defensive. And they want to make sure their employees are not a hack waiting to happen.

Data show phishing emails are more and more common as entry points for hackers. Unwittingly clicking on a link in a scam email could unleash malware into a network or provide other access to cyberthieves.

So a growing number of companies, including Twitter Inc., are giving their workers a pop quiz, testing security savvy by sending spoof phishing emails to see who bites.

"New employees fall for it all the time," said Josh Aberant, postmaster at Twitter, during a data privacy town hall meeting recently in New York City.

Falling for the fake scam offers a teachable moment that businesses hope will ensure employees won't succumb to a real threat. It's even a niche industry: companies like Wombat Security and PhishMe offer the service for a fee.

Phishing is very effective, according to Verizon's 2014 data breach investigations report, one of the most comprehensive in the industry. Eighteen percent of users will visit a link in a phishing email which could compromise their data, the

report found.

Not only is phishing on the rise, the phish are getting smarter. Criminals are "getting clever about social engineering," said Patrick Peterson, CEO of email security company Agari. As more people wise up to age-old

Fake phishing emails are indistinguishable from the real ones. That's the point. In one sent out by Wombat, the subject reads "Email Account Security Report - Unusual Activity." The email informs the recipient that his or her account will be

colleagues, so they can learn too." It also offers tips on recognizing suspicious messages.

In the 14 years since PhishMe CEO and co-founder Rohyt Belani has been in information security, he says the industry has

better training workers.

"We posted posters in hallways, gave out squishy balls, (made) screen savers," he said. "When was the last time you changed your password because of a squishy ball?"

While phishing training emails are a "good cautionary measure," they aren't "actually going to strike at the core of the issue," believes Agari's Peterson. He, along with large Internet companies such as Facebook Inc., Google Inc. and Microsoft Corp., support establishing a standard that makes it impossible for scammers to impersonate your bank, social network or other business in an email. Think of it as a verification system for emails. For now, though, this seems a long way off.

So, at Pinnacle Financial Partners in Nashville, Tennessee, employees will continue to receive fake phishing emails, about



In this June 16, 2013 file photo, users browse the Internet in an underground station in Hong Kong.

Associated Press

PayPal and bank scams, for example, phishing emails are evolving. You might see a Walgreens gift card offer or a notice about President Barack Obama warning you about Ebola.

The phishing tests recognize that many security breaches are the result of human error. A recent study by the nonprofit Online Trust Alliance found that of more than 1,000 breaches in the first half of 2014, 90 percent were preventable and more than 1 in 4 were caused by employees, many by accident.

locked for unusual activity such as sending a large number of undeliverable messages. At the bottom there's a link that, were this a real phishing email, would infect the recipient's computer with malicious software or steal password and login information. If you click?

Up pops a web page: "Oops! The email you just responded to was a fake phishing email. Don't worry! It was sent to you to help you learn how to avoid real attacks. Please do not share your experience with

changed from something a "geek in the back room" was supposed to take care of to something companies now handle at the highest level of management. The nature of the intruder also has changed, from pranksters to criminal organizations and nation-states.

As the security industry developed, he said, so did the idea of the user as "stupid" and the "weakest link," destined to continue to fall for phishing attempts and other scams. Belani disagrees with that, faulting the security industry for not

one a quarter. The results are reported to the company's audit committee and board of directors, said Chief Information officer Randy Withrow. Since the 800-employee company started the Wombat program Withrow said it has seen a 25 percent drop in successful phishing attempts.

Workers "take it very personally" when they fall for it, he said. "They become apologetic and wonder, 'how did I miss it?'" Luckily for Pinnacle, it was only a test. □

Aer Lingus says strongly favors acquisition by IAG

S. POGATCHNIK
Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — Irish airline Aer Lingus says it now strongly favors its acquisition by British Airways parent IAG in a statement to shareholders issued Friday. IAG officials spent two days in Dublin this week lobbying the Irish government, the airline's No. 2 shareholder, to part with its 25.1 percent stake in the airline. IAG has

stressed it won't proceed with its takeover bid, valuing Aer Lingus at 1.36 billion euros (\$1.55 billion), unless the government agrees to sell. Aer Lingus Chairman Colm Barrington said an IAG takeover would allow the airline to grow most strongly on North American routes, with Dublin Airport likely to grow as "a natural gateway" for trans-Atlantic travelers. Barrington said detailed

analysis of IAG's Jan. 26 offer of 2.55 euros (\$2.90) per share, an improvement on two earlier offers, shows that "a combination of Aer Lingus with IAG has a compelling strategic rationale and will deliver significant benefits for Aer Lingus, its employees, its customers and for Ireland." But the airline's share price slid 1.8 percent to close Friday night at 2.21 euros (\$2.52) as investors as-

sessed that the airline's two biggest shareholders, the government and budget rival Ryanair, have shown little public appetite to sell. The government faces substantial public opposition to any sale of its remaining stake in Aer Lingus, a shamrock-emblazoned symbol of Irish independence that was floated on the Irish and British stock exchanges in 2006. □

ArcelorMittal marks \$955 million loss as commodities slump

STANLEY REED
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LONDON - The world's largest steelmaker, ArcelorMittal, reported Friday a \$955 million loss for the fourth quarter, showing how difficult it is to make money in slumping commodities businesses like steel and iron ore.

The company's large mining operations were hit by the sharp fall in iron ore prices, while its North American steel unit also slowed. The Luxembourg-based steel maker's write-off of \$621 million on its investment in China Oriental, a Chinese steel business, was another big contributor to the loss.

Also Friday, ThyssenKrupp of Germany, another steelmaker, reported a modest profit of 43 million euros (about \$48.8 million) for the quarter, in contrast to a loss of 70 million euros a year earlier.

ThyssenKrupp, based in Essen, is benefiting from getting out of steel operations in the United States and paring its units in Europe while investing in capital goods businesses like elevators, factory design and auto components, which are less vulnerable to commodity price cycles.

"The economic environment remains uncertain and the geopolitical risks high," Heinrich Hiesinger, the company's chief executive, said in a statement. "That is why we are continuing to concentrate on the things that we can influence ourselves."

In a telephone interview, Guido Kerkhoff, ThyssenKrupp's chief financial officer, said that despite negative sentiment about the European economy, the company was experiencing growth in demand for products like auto components. He said the nearly 20 percent fall of the euro against the dollar since last spring, making German exports cheaper abroad, was aiding its industrial activities in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

"We produce a lot in Germany and depend a lot on German carmakers," he said. "The weaker euro can only be helpful." □

Stocks close at record highs as energy recovers

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A slight gain was enough to push the stock market back to record Friday. Stocks climbed as a rebound in oil prices helped push energy stocks higher. A report that showed growth picked up faster than forecast in Europe in the fourth quarter of last year also boosted investor sentiment. Investors were also picking over the latest earn-

ings news. Stocks have surged in February, rebounding from a January slump, as recovering oil prices have boosted energy stocks. Growing corporate earnings and the announcement of more stimulus to boost growth in Europe have also helped turn investor sentiment around this month.

"Stability seems to be coming back," said JJ Kinahan, chief strategist at TD Ameritrade. "Overall, I think the market is going to go higher ... but it may be a case of

short of its all-time high. The Nasdaq composite gained 36.22 points, or 0.8 percent, to 4,893.84.

About three-quarters of the companies in the S&P 500 index have now reported results for the fourth quarter, and earnings for the period are projected to rise by 7.5 percent. While that is a decline from growth of 10.4 percent in the previous quarter, it's better than analysts were expecting at the start of December.

On Friday, V.F. Corpora-

The media company gained \$2.06, or 3.6 percent, to \$59.83 after it reported earnings late Thursday that were slightly better than Wall Street analysts had been expecting. The company got a boost from higher advertising revenues, led by the broadcast of "Thursday Night Football" and political ad revenues associated with the mid-term elections.

This month's sharp gains are making some analysts cautious on stocks.

The price-earnings ratio for next year's earnings for S&P 500 companies is at 17.1, the highest level in more than a decade. The measure is a gauge of how much investors are willing to pay for a company's earnings.

"Watch those valuation levels very carefully," said James Liu, Global Market Strategist for J.P. Morgan Asset Management.

Rather than tracking the broader market investors should focus on certain sectors, Liu says. At the moment he favors so-called consumer discretionary stocks, which should benefit as hiring picks and consumers get more money in their pockets from lower gas prices.

ConAgra was one of the biggest losers in the S&P 500 on Friday.

The food company, whose brands include Swiss Miss hot chocolate mix and Slim Jim beef jerky, dropped \$1.59, or 4.4 percent, to \$34.83 after cutting its earnings outlook for the year late Thursday. ConAgra blamed the impact of a stronger dollar and intense competition for its Private Brands unit. □



Traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange in New York. A slight gain was enough to push the stock market back to record Friday. Stocks climbed as a rebound in oil prices helped push energy stocks higher.

(AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

ings news. CBS gained after reporting earnings that exceeded analyst's expectations, as the media company got a boost from better advertising revenue. V.F. Corporation, a clothing company whose brands include Vans, Wrangler and Timberland, jumped after giving an upbeat outlook for the year.

two steps forward, one step back."

The Standard & Poor's 500 rose 8.51 points, or 0.4 percent, to 2,096.99. That surpassed the previous record close of 2,090.57 set Dec. 29.

The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 46.97 points, or 0.3 percent, to 18,019.35. The index is still 35 points

tion was one of the biggest gainers in the S&P 500. The company gained \$4.26, or 6 percent, to \$75.26 after the company said that it was expecting "meaningful growth" in all of its markets worldwide, despite challenges because of a strengthening dollar.

CBS was another winner on Friday.

Apple backslides slightly on 60-hour workweek limits

BRIAN X. CHEN

© 2015 New York Times

Apple sold more iPhones last year than anyone could have imagined. But the company found that a lower percentage of factories assembling its products complied with a policy preventing excessive work hours.

The company's policy lim-

its factory workers to a 60-hour workweek. Apple said it had found that 92 percent of the more than 1.1 million workers in its supply chain worked no more than 60 hours a week last year, compared with 95 percent in 2013.

Apple sold an enormous number of iPhones last year - last quarter alone,

it sold 74.5 million smartphones - so it is not surprising that factories pushed more of their workers over the limits.

Things also do not appear as grim as they did six years ago, when Apple said 41 percent of audited factories were compliant with the 60-hour maximum workweek in 2008.

Apple declined to comment on the decrease in compliance with its 60-hour maximum workweek. Jeff Williams, Apple's head of operations, argued in a letter published online that every violation discovered by the company could lead to improvements.

"People sometimes point to the discovery of prob-

lems as evidence that our process isn't working. Nothing could be further from the truth," Williams wrote.

On the same day that Apple published the audit results, China Labor Watch, a workers' rights group based in New York, published a report on conditions at some factories that make Apple products. □

Sharp loss for Kellogg as sales of cereal remain stale

STEPHANIE STROM

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Consumers continued to shun cereal and its snack bar derivatives, causing steep losses at Kellogg Co. at the end of last year.

Kellogg reported this week that it lost \$293 million, or 82 cents a share, in the fourth quarter that ended Jan. 3, in contrast to profits of \$819 million in the same period the previous year.

Stripping out a long list of costs associated with currency fluctuations, restructuring, adjustments to pension liabilities and other charges, Kellogg would have earned 86 cents a share, the company said. Sales were flat at \$3.5 billion, and the company reduced its expectations for this year, saying it did not expect sales to improve much and that its operating profits would be lower.

"One of the key targets of success, I think, is targeting realistic goals, which can be achieved over the long term," John A. Bryant, chief executive of Kellogg, said in a conference call with analysts Thursday.

"We think low-single-digit

top-line growth for the total business is an achievable goal."

Some of the analysts, however, questioned what was happening to

going?" asked David Driscoll, who follows the company at Citi Research. "We're not relying on Project K to drive bottom-line results," Bryant said.

the usual deference shown to management on such calls, Jason English, an investment analyst at Goldman Sachs, pointedly asked why the company

operating profits this year by as much as 4 percent.

"It kind of surprised me, given that you've taken so many efforts to shrink your employee population," English said, referring to cutbacks taking place over several years.

Bryant said that incentive payments given to employees last year were "below target rates" and noted that the company's incentive program extended well beyond the executive suite.

"It's just a reflection of underperformance in 2014 and going back to targets in 2015," he said.

Kris Charles, a company spokeswoman, said that at the beginning of each year, Kellogg sets aside a budget for bonuses for that year, planning to pay all of it out.

"As the year progresses, the total percentage payout may change based on the performance of the business," Charles said.

In 2014, she said, Kellogg paid less in bonuses than it had anticipated because the business had not performed well. □



This photo shows a box of Kellogg's cereal on display on a supermarket shelf in Middleton, Mass. This week, Kellogg reported steep losses stemming from the end of last year.

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

the money being saved through the company's restructuring plan, known as Project K.

"Where's all the money

"We're investing Project K back into the business - we've got to get this business back to growth."

In a rare departure from

was "rebasing" incentive compensation at a time of lagging performance. Kellogg said Thursday the change would reduce

Credit Suisse swings to profit, but braces for expenses

CHAD BRAY

© 2015 New York Times

LONDON - Even as it swung to a profit in the fourth quarter from a year earlier, Credit Suisse this week announced cost cuts and pay reductions as it deals with a stronger Swiss franc and the fallout of legal settlements.

The bank reported fourth-quarter profit of 921 million Swiss francs, or about \$993 million, compared with a

loss of 476 million francs in the period a year earlier. Revenue rose 8 percent, to 6.38 billion francs. The most recent results exceeded analysts' expectations.

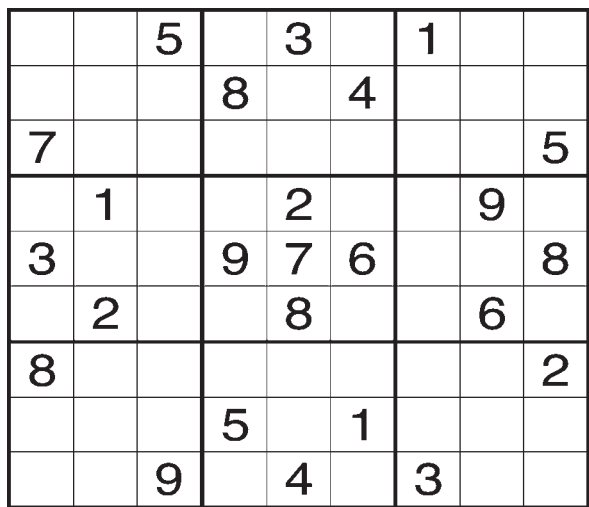
The year-earlier period in part reflected an \$885 million settlement to resolve claims that the bank had sold questionable loans to the mortgage finance giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the prelude to the financial crisis. The pe-

riod also reflected additional legal provisions, primarily related to inquiries into wealthy Americans avoiding taxes by hiding assets overseas. "Our solid results for the fourth quarter demonstrate consistency in our performance amid a challenging market environment with increased volatility," Brady W. Dougan, the Credit Suisse chief executive, said in a news release. Credit

Suisse's fourth-quarter performance, however, came before the Swiss National Bank abruptly abandoned a cap on the franc against the euro, causing the value of the franc to surge. Dougan estimated that as a result, 2015 earnings would be reduced by about 3 percent, and Credit Suisse said it planned several measures this year to offset the appreciation of the currency and the effect of

low interest rates, including about 200 million francs in cost reductions. Dougan said the bank expected to more than offset these factors by the end of 2017. Credit Suisse also said that executive bonuses for 2014 were cut by 9 percent and that the board of directors and executive board had agreed to sharp cuts in their compensation in light of the bank's settlements with U.S. authorities. □

Conceptis Sudoku



2/14

Yesterday's puzzle answer	4	5	2	9	7	3	8	6	1
	3	8	9	6	4	1	7	5	2
	6	7	1	5	2	8	4	9	3
	8	3	6	7	9	4	2	1	5
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	1	2	7	3	8	5	9	4	6
	9	4	5	2	3	6	1	7	8
	7	1	3	8	5	9	6	2	4
	2	6	8	4	1	7	5	3	9

I'm a modern woman!

I don't have to wait!

I'm just gonna do it!

send!

Aaargh! What have I done???

DING!

Will u be my ♥?
-AMY

Reply

OK!

YEE-HA

2/14

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DID I TELL YOU ABOUT THAT GIRL WHO GAVE ME A VALENTINE?

YES, YOU DID, ELMO

I DID, HUH?

WELL, AT MY TENDER AGE, THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT SO FAR

THE BALL'S BACK IN YOUR COURT, MR. B.

www.bonae.com

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I'M GOING TO TAKE CARLA OUT FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

OH, THE ONE WITH THE BOSTON ACCENT?

YEAH, I WAS GOING TO BUY HER SOME CHOCOLATES, BUT ALL SHE WANTS IS A BIG FISH

NO, I SAID BRING ME A COD... A VALENTINE'S COD

Baseman

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2/14

HONEY, IF YOU'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING, WILL YOU GET ME A COUD ONE?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, BUT THANKS.

I'M GETTING A SWEATER.

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FIVE BUCKS FOR A STUPID VALENTINE'S CARD?

SERIOUSLY??

KISS! KISS! KISS! KISS! KISS! KISS!

I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE IT!

I'LL TAKE AT LEAST THREE.

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DOWN
1 Makes a mistake
2 Uris or Panetta

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51 TKO callers	

To combat fraud, Visa wants to track your smartphone

KEN SWEET
AP Business Writer
NEW YORK (AP) —

Those days of calling your bank to let them know that, yes, you really are in Thailand, and yes, you really did use your credit card to buy \$200 in sarongs, may be coming to an end.

The payment processing company Visa will roll out a new feature this spring that will allow its cardholders to inform their banks where they are automatically, using the location function found in nearly every smartphone.

Having your bank and Visa know where you are at all times may sound a little like "Big Brother." But privacy experts are actually applauding the feature, saying that, if used correctly, it could protect cardholders and cut down on credit card fraud.

Credit and debit card fraud costs consumers and banks billions of dollars each year, and that figure has been growing as data breaches have become more common. The banking industry had \$1.57 billion in debit card fraud in 2013 and \$4 billion in credit card fraud in 2012, the latest years for which data are available, according to the Federal Reserve.

Facing these high costs, banks and the payment processors have been stepping up their efforts to

cut down on fraud, and Visa's announcement is just one small piece of this drive. JPMorgan Chase's CEO Jamie Dimon has said repeatedly that his bank spends \$250 million overall on cybersecurity every year, and plans to double that spending.

Here's how it works: starting in April, banks will update their smartphone apps to include Visa's new location-tracking software. If the consumer opts in, the Visa software will, over a period of time, establish a customer's home territory of roughly a 50-mile radius. If the person uses his or her Visa card at stores in that area, those transactions will be considered low risk for fraud.

When that person travels outside their home area, the phone will notify Visa that they've entered a new city or country, using either the phone's cellular data plan or the next time the phone connects to a Wi-Fi network. When that person uses their Visa card for a transaction in that location, Visa will already know he or she is there and will be less likely to flag the card for a fraud alert.

"We will be able to compare the merchant's location to the most recent cellphone location to show it's a less risky transaction," Visa executive Mark Nelsen said. □

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Study: World dumps 8.8M tons of plastics into oceans

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

SAN JOSE, California (AP)

— Each year about 8.8 million tons of plastic ends up in the world oceans, a quantity much higher than previous estimates, according to a new study that tracked marine debris from its source.

That's the equivalent of five grocery bags full of plastic debris dotting each foot of coastline around the world, said study lead author Jenna Jambeck, an environment engineering professor at the University of Georgia.

And if the biggest polluters, mostly developing Asian countries, don't clean up how they throw stuff away, Jambeck projects that by 2025 the total accumulated plastic trash in the oceans will reach around 170 million tons. That's based on population trends and continued waste management disposal problems, although there may be some early signs of change, she said.

More than half of the plastic waste that flows into the oceans comes from just five countries: China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

The only industrialized western country on the list of top 20 plastic polluters is the United States at No. 20. The U.S. and Europe are not mismanaging their col-



Jenna Jambeck, an environment engineering professor at the University of Georgia, holds a shopping bag filled with plastic trash from the ocean, right, and a plastic baggie with trash collected last fall from a clean up at Panama Beach, Fla., Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015, at the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) conference in San Jose, Calif.

Associated Press

lected waste, so the plastic trash coming from those countries is due to litter, researchers said.

While China is responsible for 2.4 million tons of plastic that makes its way into the ocean, nearly 28 percent of the world total, the United States contributes just 77,000 tons, which is less than 1 percent, according to the study published

Thursday in the journal *Science*. This is mostly because developed countries have systems to trap and collect plastic waste, Jambeck said.

"We need to wake up and see our waste," Jambeck said. "I think the problem in some ways has sort of snuck up around us."

The amount of plastics estimated going into the water

is equal to how much tuna is fished year, so "we are taking out tuna and putting in plastic," study co-author Kara Lavendar Law said in a press conference at the American Association for the Advancement of Science conference.

Nancy Wallace, who is head of the marine debris program for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration, said plastic waste in the water is a crucial worldwide issue because it is eaten by sea life and it also collects ocean toxins.

There's also a clean-up cost and it affects tourism, she said.

Unlike previous studies which looked at the plastic in the oceans, Jambeck used World Bank statistics on 192 countries' waste streams to track and estimate plastic pollution from the source. She examined how much waste is generated and the percentage that reaches the oceans.

Jambeck's estimates were for 2010 and ranged between 5 and 14 million tons of plastic, with 8.8 million tons the middle scenario estimate.

Previous estimates were less than 1 million tons but those were based on samples. Scientists know that much can be hidden in the bottom of the ocean and in places researchers don't get to. Last year Andrés Cózar of the University of Cadiz in Spain estimated the waste at about 35,000 tons based on samples, but he said the new Jambeck work adds important information to the puzzle of debris. And Cozar said his team acknowledged that "99 percent of the ocean's plastic is missing." □

China wind power capacity jumps to record high

BEIJING (AP) — China boosted its installed wind energy capacity last year to a record 19.81 million kilowatts as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter tries to switch its power grid to cleaner energy sources. The National Energy Ad-

ministration said Thursday that wind farms produced 153.4 billion kilowatt hours of electric power in 2014, making up 2.8 percent of total generated electricity. Last year's installed wind power capacity represented a 23 percent jump from

the 2013 level of 16.09 million kilowatts.

China still produces about 80 percent of its total energy and about 60 percent of electricity by burning coal. In November, the government pledged to produce 20 percent of the country's

total energy through non-fossil fuels by 2030, doubling its current level, while capping growth in its carbon emissions by the same year, if not earlier.

Already, China is a world leader in solar and wind energy production and has

announced plans to further boost renewable energy investment. At the same time, China burns about half of the world's coal and emits twice as much carbon as the United States, the second biggest emitting country. □

Familiar Oscar pattern seen in this year's acting races

SEY BAHR

AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Oscar envelopes have been full of surprises over the years, yet one pattern persists: academy voters are moved by affliction.

From 1988 to 1997, eight of the best actor winners had played a character with a mental or physical disability or disease. It's been less of a trend for women but this year, an afflicted role is the clear favorite in the best actress category.

In Oscar's 87th year, the acting front-runners for the Academy Awards are Eddie Redmayne, for his portrayal of ALS victim Stephen Hawking in "The Theory of Everything," and five-time nominee Julianne Moore, for her depiction of a woman suffering from early onset Alzheimer's disease in "Still Alice."

Both have scored wins from the Screen Actors Guild and the British film academy and in some ways, their Oscar success has been a foregone conclusion for months.

Academy Award-winning depictions of disabilities and diseases have been around since the beginning, but starting in the late 1970s and reaching a saturation point in the mid-1990s, it began to look like a formula.

Consider Dustin Hoffman in "Rain Man," Daniel Day-Lewis in "My Left Foot," Tom Hanks in "Forrest Gump," Al Pacino in "Scent of a Woman," Geoffrey Rush in "Shine," or Colin Firth in "The King's Speech," to name just a few.

How have they done it again? Even the possible upsets in the best actor category fit the pattern, with Bradley Cooper's portrayal of the suffering Chris Kyle in "American Sniper," or Michael Keaton as a possible schizophrenic in "Birdman." Alan Turing, as portrayed by Benedict Cumberbatch also has what seems like undiagnosed Asperger tendencies in "The Imitation Game." The short answer: Oscar simply wants to see the work.

"There are three things that academy members seem

to gravitate toward: Actors who play real people, actors who go through a big physical transformation for their roles and actors playing a specific disease or condition, whether mental or physical," said Dave Karger, chief correspondent for Fandango. Redmayne's Hawking checks off two of those irresistible boxes.

One reason, Karger notes, is that the acting is out there.

"It's a very outward, easy to appreciate challenge that the actor has, to take a disease or a condition that we've all either heard about or that has touched our lives and really bring to life what it's like to tackle it," said Karger.

An actor's work and process is built in to those performances in an understandable way to non-actors.

"It's kind of like a big speech, or a big meltdown. It's something that, when the voters have the ballots in front of them, they can think back and have an easy reminder of what was so great about a particular performance," said Karger. Also, actors themselves can't seem to resist the challenge.

"It felt like solving a puzzle," said Redmayne at last year's Toronto Film Festival. He spent nearly five months doing research, meeting with Hawking, his family, his old students and specialists to figure out how ALS progresses and how it affects the body. His goal was to be "really intricate in the physical degeneration."

Moore's character Alice might be fictional, but it was important for her and the directors to show a realistic portrait of the effects of early onset Alzheimer's. To prepare, she immersed herself in the world of both doctors and patients.

"I was really starting at zero," said Moore late last year. "I didn't want to represent anything on screen that I hadn't actually seen. I felt like that was the only fair way to do it."

Continued on next page



In this Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014 file photo, Professor Stephen Hawking, right, and cast member Eddie Redmayne arrive on the blue carpet for the UK premiere of "The Theory of Everything" at the Odeon in Leicester Square, central London.

Associated Press

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Oscar

Continued from page 29

But process and transformation mean nothing if what ends up on screen doesn't move academy voters.

"When you talk about thousands of people voting, generally the consensus votes with its heart," said AwardsDaily.com owner and Oscar blogger Sasha Stone.

"They need that urgency... usually that comes up in the form of someone they feel sorry for, who they want to see overcome their disability," she said.

In some ways, the perceived expectation of awards recognition for this type of performance can actually diminish the work of the actors to cynical on-lookers.

"I don't want to make it seem like anyone can play someone with a disease and win an Oscar. It has to be the confluence of the



This photo provided by courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures shows Bradley Cooper as Chris Kyle in Warner Bros. Pictures' and Village Roadshow Pictures' drama "American Sniper," distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures and in select territories by Village Roadshow Pictures.

Associated Press

right role and the right actor," said Karger.

Plus, it doesn't always result in a win, or even a nomination. "Look at Jennifer Aniston. She tried it and it didn't work for her," added Stone,

referring to Aniston not being nominated for her portrayal of a woman suffering from chronic pain in the little-seen drama "Cake."

Also, as USC School of Cinematic Arts associate pro-

fessor Jason Squire notes, it's a positive thing when these performances break out.

"There's a healthy trend toward socializing these characters so you don't think of

them as disability first. Disability is just a component of a character," he said.

With academy members still voting, nothing is locked in just yet. Oscar has surprised us before. □

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What Is the Purpose of Society?



MARK BITTMAN

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The world of food and agriculture symbolizes most of what's gone wrong in the United States. But because food is plentiful for most people, and the damage that conventional agriculture does isn't readily evident to everyone, it's important that we look deeper, beyond food, to the structure that underlies most decisions: the political economy.

Progressives are not thinking broadly or creatively enough. By failing to pressure Democrats to take strong stands on everything from environmental protection to gun control to income inequality, progressives allow the party to use populist rhetoric while making America safer for business than it is for Americans. No one seriously believes that Hillary Clinton will ever put the interests of Main Street before those of her donors from Wall Street, do they? At least not unless she's pushed, and hard.

It's clear to most everyone, regardless of politics, that the big issues - labor, race, food, immigration, education and so on - must be "fixed," and that fixing any one of these will help with the others. But this kind of change must begin with an agreement about principles, specifically principles of human rights and well-being rather than principles of making a favorable business climate.

Shouldn't adequate shelter, clothing, food and health care be universal? Isn't everyone owed a society that works toward guaranteeing the well-being of its citizens? Shouldn't we prioritize avoiding self-destruction?

Plenty of Democrats, even those who think of themselves as progressive, would not answer yes to those questions. Some would answer, "Don't be naïve, that's impossible," and others would say, "All we need to provide is equal opportunity for all and let the market sort it out." (To which I'd reply, "Talk about naïve!") I'm fine with disagreement, but I'm not fine with standard public questions like "How do we create a better climate for business so it can provide more jobs?" Consider what this implies about the purpose of people, to say nothing about the meaning of life. The business of America should not

be business, but well-being.

Think about it this way: There are two kinds of operating systems, hard and soft. A clock is a hard system. We know what it's for, we know when it isn't working, and we know that 10 clock experts would agree on how to fix it - and could do so.

Soft systems, like agriculture and economics, are more complex. We don't all agree on goals, and we don't agree on whether things are working or in need of repair. For example, is contemporary American agriculture a system for nourishing people and providing a livelihood for farmers? Or is it one for denuding the nation's topsoil while poisoning land, water, workers and consumers and enriching corporations? Our collective actions would indicate that our principles favor the latter; that has to change.

Defining goals that matter to people is critical, because the most powerful way to change a complex, soft system is to change its purpose. For example, if we had a national agreement that food is not just a commodity, a way to make money, but instead a way to nourish people and the planet and a means to safeguard our future, we could begin to reconfigure the system for that purpose. More generally, if we agreed that human well-being was a priority, creating more jobs would not ring so hollow.

Sadly, even if we did agree, complex systems are not subject to clever fixes. Rather, changes often have unexpected results (that shouldn't happen with a clock), so change necessarily remains incremental. But without an agreement on goals, without statements of purpose, we are going to continue to see changes that are not in the interest of the majority. Increasingly, it's corporations and not governments that are determining how the world works. As unrepresentative as government might seem right now, there is at least a chance of improving it, whereas corporations will always act in their own interests.

It's been adequately demonstrated that more than minor tweaks are needed to improve life for most people. Let's try to make sense of where the world is now instead of relying on outdated doctrines like "capitalism" and "socialism" created by people who had no idea what the 21st century would look like. Let's ambitiously and publicly philosophize - as the conservatives do - and think about what shape a sensible political economy might take.

The big ideas and strategies for how we should manage society and thrive with the planet are not a set of rules handed down from on high. To develop them for now and the future is a major challenge, and we - progressives and our allies - have to work harder at it. No one is going to figure it out for us. □



The Riddle of Powering Electric Cars



JOE NOCERA

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Steve LeVine became interested in batteries in the wake of the financial crisis. LeVine is the Washington correspondent for Quartz, a news site covering the global economy, and he sensed, he told me recently, "a loss of confidence in the U.S. in our ability to create a real economy" - one based not on financial instruments or a real estate boom, but real products that would help create entire new industries.

The battery could be such a product. Not just any battery, of course, but a battery designed for electric cars and capable of powering them for 200 miles or even 300 miles per charge. A battery that could compete with - and eventually replace - the internal combustion engine and transform the electric car from a niche product to a mass-market automobile.

Such a battery did not yet exist. But if such a thing could be invented, it might well develop into a \$100 billion-plus market in its first five or six years of existence, according to LeVine. A battery like that could vastly improve energy security. And with so much less exhaust spewed into the air, the effect on climate change could be lowered. The United States was trying to develop such a battery, but so were many other countries.

That interest led LeVine to the Argonne National Laboratory, one of the Department of Energy's 17 national labs. For the better part of two years he was given access to its Battery Department, emerging with a captivating book entitled "The Powerhouse: Inside the Invention of a Battery to Save the World." With the closure or winnowing of many of corporate America's industrial labs - not least the famed Bell Labs, which is a shadow of its once-mighty self - industry now relies heavily on the U.S. government's national labs for basic scientific research. Thus it was that scientists at Argonne, which is in the Chicago suburbs, discovered the battery chemistry that made electric cars possible, called NMC (for nickel-manganese-cobalt). The Chevrolet Volt uses a version of NMC, as will, reportedly, the next generation of Nissan Leafs. Which also suggests its drawback: The Volt only gets about 40 miles on pure battery power alone before it switches to its gasoline-powered engine.

The core of LeVine's book is about the effort to take the next big step: create a battery that can achieve five times that mileage, while still remaining stable - stability is always a big issue with batteries - and affordable. The scientists at Argonne - some of them larger-than-life figures in the battery world - labeled this effort NMC 2.0. Though the writing can get technical at times, LeVine still tells a rollicking good tale. The scientists make a number of painstaking advances, inching the chemistry forward, only to discover problems. One such problem is called "voltage fade" - an instability that is serious enough to make the battery unusable in an electric vehicle.

There is also a private company in LeVine's narrative, a startup called Envia Systems. Licensing the advances made by Argonne, it claims to have solved the rest of the puzzle. Its executives are persuasive enough that General

Motors contracts with them to create the battery for an electric car it is calling, internally, the Bolt, which is supposed to get 200 miles per charge.

LeVine told me that, for a long time, he fully expected that his book would end with Envia solving the riddle of NMC 2.0, and having a wildly successful public offering. But that's not what happens. As GM, Argonne, and LeVine eventually discover, the Envia claims were wildly exaggerated. After GM finds out the company won't be able to deliver after all, it ends its contract with the company and looks to LG Chem Ltd., the big South Korean company, to supply the battery.

Indeed, by the end of the book, scientists still haven't solved the voltage fade problem, and NMC 2.0 seems as far away as ever. Argonne wins a competition set up by the Department of Energy to create a "Battery Hub," in which more than a dozen national labs, universities and corporate partners will work together to completely rethink their approach to the conceptual leap the government - and everyone else - is hoping for. In effect, they're starting over.

There is grist in "The Powerhouse" for critics of President Barack Obama. He pushed for battery innovation just as he pushed for solar innovation. The latter gave us Solyndra; the former gave us Envia. Financing efforts to invent a new battery is, without question, a form of industrial policy. But LeVine thinks this view is misguided, and so do I.

"France and Germany and China have renewed their push for electric cars," he says. "The stakes are so high and the dividends so rich that they keep going" - even if the quest seems, at times, quixotic.

Besides, batteries are, as LeVine puts it, "a hard problem." If the government won't try to solve that problem, who will? □

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Rio's Carnival kicks off; city gears up for 5 days of fun

A. GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — The five days of over-the-top parades and raucous, alcohol-soaked street parties that make up Rio de Janeiro's world-famous Carnival celebrations kicked off Friday amid a recent avalanche of bad news, including more evidence of Brazil's stalling economy, an ongoing drought and a snowballing corruption scandal at state-run oil giant Petrobras.

In the annual ceremony that marks the official start of the festivities, Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes handed over the keys of the city to King Momo, the mythical jester who reigns over the extravaganza. Musicians from Unidos da Tijuca, the samba group that won last year's flamboyant parade competition, played a medley of the samba classics that make up the city's tried and true Carnival soundtrack as a few dancers showed off



Dancers perform in a street party in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The celebration is one of hundreds of street parties that are kicking off in the run-up to Carnival, which starts on Friday. Some of the "blocos" or street parties have social themes, but for many the basic message is just: "Dance."
(AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

their fancy footwork. Paes acknowledged that times are tough, but suggested Carnival would represent a welcome respite. "We have lots of problems,

lots of challenges and lots of defects," he said, "but we are very proud to live in a city like Rio de Janeiro." Paes said the festivities were sure to bring more than a

welcome dose of fun: More than 450 street parties were expected to bring an estimated 975,000 tourists out onto the streets. The visitors are expected to inject

around \$780 million into the local economy, he said. Still, many residents complain that the "blocos," popular street parties, snarl traffic, generate tons of litter and generally complicate daily life, particularly in areas such as Ipanema and Copacabana. Both beachside neighborhoods are epicenters of the "blocos," which are dedicated to everything from Michael Jackson to Super Mario Brothers and see revelers dress up to dance, sing, parade and down prodigious amounts of beer under the scorching sun.

With the corruption scandal at Petrobras making headlines daily for the past year, petroleum-themed Carnival costumes were expected to prove among this year's most popular. A Rio-based mask company has been churning out rubber masks of Maria das Gracas Foster, the Petrobras president who resigned earlier this month. □